

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5

1. A method for a voice over internet protocol conference bridge among a plurality of user terminals comprising the steps of:

10 originating an internet protocol call using session initiation protocol among the plurality of user terminals;

negotiating by the plurality of user terminals a common bearer format among the plurality of user terminals; and

15 coupling a data input/output of each of the plurality of user terminals to a conference bridge.

20 2. The method for voice over internet protocol conference bridge as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of coupling includes the step of coupling the plurality of user terminals to a packet switched conference bridge.

25 3. The method for a voice over internet protocol conference bridge as claimed in claim 1, wherein said step of negotiating includes the step of finding a least common denominator bearer format among the plurality of user terminals.

30 4. The method for a voice over internet protocol conference bridge as claimed in claim 1, wherein said step of negotiating further includes the step of determining whether the plurality of user terminals support multiple bearer formats.

35

00849020 032704  
102220 02261800

72

negotiating a homogeneous bearer format among the plurality of user terminals which have multiple bearer formats;

canceling the step of coupling the plurality of user terminals.

15

20

each of said plurality of user terminals receiving a bearer format of others of said plurality of user terminals and converting the received bearer format to the native bearer format for use by each of the plurality of user terminals.

30

negotiating a common bearer format between  
the first party and the second party;



requesting by the user terminal a data coupling between the user terminal and the plurality of user terminals via a conference bridge.

5            11. The method for a voice over internet protocol conference bridge as claimed in claim 10, wherein said step of negotiating includes the step of finding a least common denominator bearer format among the plurality of user terminals.

10

12. The method for a voice over internet protocol conference bridge as claimed in claim 10, wherein said step of negotiating further includes the step of determining whether the plurality of user terminals

15 support multiple bearer formats.

13. The method for a voice over internet protocol conference bridge as claimed in claim 12, wherein the step of determining includes the steps of:

20 negotiating a homogeneous bearer format among  
the plurality of user terminals which have multiple  
bearer formats;

determining whether a common bearer format exists among the plurality of user terminals; and

25           canceling the step of coupling the plurality  
of user terminals.

14. The method for a voice over internet protocol conference bridge as claimed in claim 13, wherein there is further included the step of coupling the plurality of user terminals with homogeneous bearer formats.

15. The method for a voice over internet protocol conference bridge as claimed in claim 12, wherein if  
35 the plurality of user terminals supports multiple bearer formats, there is further included the steps of:

transmitting by each of said plurality of user terminals in a native bearer format; and

each of said plurality of user terminals receiving a bearer format of others of said plurality of user terminals and converting the received bearer format to the native bearer format for use by the user terminal.

16. A conference bridge apparatus for voice over internet protocol among a plurality of user terminals comprising:

a signaling coupling among the plurality of user terminals, the signaling coupling using session initiation protocol via an internet;

means for negotiating a common bearer format among the plurality of user terminals, said means for negotiating coupled to at least one of said plurality of said user terminals; and

a data coupling among each of the plurality of user terminals through a conference bridge.

17. The conference bridge apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein at least one of said plurality of user terminals includes a mobile hand set.

18. The conference bridge apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein at least one of said plurality of user terminals includes a hard wired processor.

19. The conference bridge arrangement as claimed in claim 16, wherein the signaling coupling includes an internet protocol coupling among the plurality of user terminals.

20. The conference bridge arrangement as claimed in claim 16 wherein the signaling coupling includes an

[illegible]